

Daylight Saving Is Simplicity Itself

How Ben Franklin's Idea Conceived in 1784, Just Made Into Law Here, Will Affect Folks After Easter and Save Millions to the Nation

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ON the coming April 1 more people in the United States will probably be April fool victims than on any previous or future April 1, for Congress has decreed that at 2 o'clock on the morning of March 31 the hands of the clock shall be turned forward one hour; in other words, the United States will then begin to live under the daylight saving plan, and doubtless thousands will forget to make the change.

Every individual who is wise and hates to be fooled will before retiring on the evening prior to Easter Sunday, March 31, see to it that not only his watch but every clock in the house is turned forward one hour. Otherwise on Sunday he will find the Easter services half over before he arrives at the church, and on Monday morning, April 1, 1918, rising an hour late, if he is a commuter he will miss his morning train by an hour and be greeted at the factory or office with such remarks as "April fool!" "You daylight slacker! You forgot to turn your watch ahead, eh?" and all day long he will be the butt of many jokes.

May Wait Long for Dinner.

If he starts for home at the same hour as usual and has not during the day telephoned his wife to turn the clock ahead he will have a long wait for dinner. One thing is certain, however, that before he retires that night every member of his household will know that the daylight saving plan is in effect and that the people of the United States are living an hour ahead of sun time.

The daylight saving idea is almost as old as the United States itself and our country can rightly claim the credit for all the many advantages which will accrue from it, not only in this country but also in those countries which anticipated the United States in its adoption, for it was Benjamin Franklin who first conceived the idea.

On an early morning walk along the streets of London in 1784 the thought first came to him, and in passing it on to the world at large he said:

"In a walk through the Strand and Fleet street one morning at 7 o'clock I observed there was not one shop open, although it had been daylight and the sun up above three hours, the inhabitants of London choosing voluntarily to live by candle light and sleep by sunshine; and yet often complaining a little absurdly of the duty on candles and the high price of tallow."

Soon thereafter in the *Journal de Paris* he published an article, later appearing among his essays under the title "An Economical Project," which further elaborated the advantages of daylight saving; namely, of "Turning the clock forward an hour" so that everybody would live one hour longer by daylight and one hour less by artificial light.

Beaten Repeatedly in Britain.

For many years in England in the last century Sir William Willett annually introduced his daylight saving bill in Parliament and annually the bill was defeated amid laughter and ridicule.

In 1915 Germany first adopted the plan to speed up the war production and to benefit by the tremendous saving in fuel consumption. France and England and all other European countries except Russia soon after followed her example.

Since its adoption in Europe, the United States, Canada and Mexico have been out of harmony, so far as time was concerned, with European countries, to their loss not only in business, for the stock exchanges of London and Paris under the new plan were closed before the exchanges of New York and Boston were open, but also as regards the tremendous savings possible in light bills, which, it is estimated, annually will run from \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000 in the United States alone.

The plan has been ardently advocated in this country since May, 1916, by the Merchants Association of this city, chambers of commerce of Boston, Rochester, Philadelphia, Chicago and Pittsburg, the United States Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D. C., and the National Daylight Saving Association, of which Marcus M. Marks, former Borough President of Manhattan, is the president. Mr. Marks

has often been called the "father of daylight saving in this country."

To illustrate the effect of the plan, let us follow Jack Hurryup, a New York commuter, through his first business day under the new regime.

Mr. Hurryup is a habitual reader of THE SUN, and accordingly he knows he should on the evening of March 30 turn his watch and clocks ahead one hour before he retires at 9 o'clock. But on the night of Easter Sunday he goes through the house from the kitchen to the roof and advances each clock one hour and is surprised when he arrives in his bed chamber and looks at his watch to find that he is retiring at 10:15 instead of 9:15—his first shock from daylight saving.

The alarm clock rings louder than usual the next morning and he jumps out

that several of his friends to whom he telephones have not yet arrived at the office, but are expected any minute.

At 1 o'clock, his usual hour, he hurries to the restaurant for luncheon and finds a slim crowd. Upon returning to the office all is running smoothly and at quarter of 5 he closes his desk to catch the 5:15. As he passes through the gate at the Grand Central he sees the same familiar crowd starting on their nightly journey home.

Ed, Bill and Dick are on hand for the nightly game of poker. Jack and his friend Ed were the losers in the game, for they spent most of their time joking Bill and Dick for being April fools and having missed the train in the morning.

Alighting from the commuters' special in the country, he is happily pleased to note that it has not yet begun to grow

daylight was generally used for the purpose of outdoor recreation and pursuits, and, in particular, for the cultivation of home gardening.

The athletic clubs reported that the cricketers, bowlers, golfers and tennis players took full advantage of the extra hour of light, and swimming pools and playgrounds were utilized to full capacity.

In view of the national agitation last year, which is being renewed now, for the cultivation of home gardens to increase the production of food the inauguration of the daylight saving plan in this country will undoubtedly very greatly stimulate home gardening, particularly in the neighborhood of the great cities. In New York city alone there are 1,000,000 daily commuters. Should only one-half of them use the extra hour of daylight which the plan will give in cultivating home gardens there will be 3,000,000 extra hours utilized weekly in gardening and during the seven summer months in which the plan is in operation 2,000,000 days of extra work and time will be spent by these 500,000 commuters in the cultivation of gardens.

What It Means in Potatoes.

It has been estimated that if the average commuter were to work a plot of land only 20x40 feet, which would be about 1/50th of an acre, and planted it all to potatoes, on the basis of 300 bushels per acre each commuter would be able to raise from four to five bushels of potatoes; on this basis half of the commuters of New York city would add to the potato crop during 1918 approximately 2,500,000 bushels.

The saving in lighting bills and in fuel used for producing electricity and gas will be tremendous. Public Service Engineer Robert L. Brunet of Providence, R. I., has carefully estimated this saving and fixed the amount during the period of five months, which the plan originally contemplated, at \$40,000,000, and the amount of coal saved at 1,000,000 tons. This saving will be universal as every householder will use one hour less of artificial light daily under the new plan.

Other additional benefits will be the reduction of traffic accidents due to lessened transportation of passengers under artificial light, reduction of the danger of eye strain on account of the lessened amount of reading and work done under artificial light and more time for open air military drilling.

The daylight saving bill as signed by President Wilson on March 19 provides that the plan shall go into effect at 2 o'clock antemeridian time on Sunday morning, March 31, at which time clocks and watches, probably upon a signal flashed from the United States Naval Observatory at Washington will be turned ahead one hour. Comparatively very few individuals, unless by design, will be conscious when the change is made. This hour was selected by reason of the fact that at 2 o'clock in the morning the number of railroad trains actually en route is smallest.

Nobody Will Be Inconvenienced.

Nobody will be seriously inconvenienced, unless on Easter Sunday morning or on the night previous individuals forget to turn their clocks and watches forward an hour, as the result of which omission they may find at some time during that day that they are one hour behind the rest of the country.

The remarkable thing about the effect of the movement is that practically no class of business will be injured; the only exception is the open air moving picture exhibitors, who under the new plan will be unable on account of the sun's setting an hour later to begin their performance as early as they have been accustomed in previous years, which may result in a loss of patronage. The ordinary business man, as far as his business is concerned, will not be affected in the slightest, except that he will be more often tempted this summer to go to the baseball game which will begin at 4:30 o'clock instead of 3:30 and to run down more often to the beaches for a dip before dinner.

Everybody under the new regime will continue his old habits—rising, working, dining and retiring at the same hours; we will still live by the clocks and give the laugh to the sun.



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
FROM THE ENGRAVING OF THE DUPLESSIS PORTRAIT OF 1778

Noted American philosopher is the father of daylight saving.

of bed at 6:30, leans out of the window and notes that the sun is just rising, and then realizes that he is really getting up one hour earlier by the sun, although the alarm went off at the usual hour.

He rushes through his bath and his breakfast and runs for the train. When he arrives at the station he is surprised to find many of his pals missing. The train pulls in and he runs to his customary seat in the smoker; the table and the cards are there, but only one player besides himself. He greets Ed Jones, who boarded the train at the station, above with:

"Good April fool joke on Bill and Dick! Guess they forgot to turn their watches ahead last night. We'll have some sport with them to-morrow."

Mr. Hurryup piles into the subway and is astonished to find a seat at the Grand Central, his second shock from the daylight saving. "Guess a lot of people are fooled by this daylight saving this morning," he mutters to himself.

He arrives at the office, looks at the clock to see whether he has consumed the usual time on his journey down town and is surprised to find that he is arriving at 8:15, the exact time at which he took the train at his station. Shock No. 3. No office boy in sight. He rings for his stenographer and she greets him with a hearty "Good morning!" He tells her to get the porter immediately and turn that office clock ahead one hour.

He finds no mail on his desk and concludes that the letter carrier is also one of the daylight saving April fools.

The morning runs on as usual except

dark and that the sun is still shining brightly at 6 o'clock. "We fooled you today, Old Sol, and will keep fooling you until November 1," he says to himself.

Arriving at the house he goes to the cellar, and finding that he need not turn on the lights he gets out the lawn mower and his garden tools.

"This daylight saving is all right," he calls up to Mary; "don't hurry to get on the dinner. I am going to mow the lawn and work in the garden until sundown."

After an hour's work about the grounds Jack comes in to dinner and he and Mary agree that daylight saving is the greatest boon ever conferred upon New York commuters.

The chief benefits of the plan, as proved by the experience of England, France and other European countries where it has been in force, may be generally summarized under three heads:

First—General health of all people benefited by reason of an added hour of daylight in the late afternoon, which has been and will be used for outdoor recreation and exercise.

Second—Increased production of food-stuffs through the stimulating cultivation of home gardening.

Third—Money saved in lighting bills: each householder will burn artificial light one hour less each day, provided, of course, he continues his usual habits of retiring at night.

The report of the summertime committee appointed by the British Parliament in September, 1916, to inquire into the social and economic results of the summertime act shows that the extra hour of